

VZCZCXRO5888

OO RUEHBZ RUEHDBU RUEH DU RUEHFL RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHMR RUEHNP RUEHPA
RUEHRN RUEHROV RUEHSL RUEHSR RUEHTRO
DE RUCNDT #0723/01 2051640
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 241640Z JUL 09
FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6986
INFO RUEHZO/AFRICAN UNION COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 USUN NEW YORK 000723

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF, IO, FM, USUN/W

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/23/2019

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [PHUM](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [KPKO](#) [UNSC](#) [SO](#) [ER](#)

SUBJECT: SOMALI FOREIGN MINISTER OMAAR POSITIVE ON THE TFG,
FRUSTRATED BY ERITREA

1.(SBU) SUMMARY. During a July 23 meeting with Ambassador DiCarlo, Somali Foreign Minister Omaar gave a positive assessment of the TFG's political, military and administrative progress, while lamenting that Eritrea continued to show, "no signs of good will and good faith." Omaar described the AU's united front against Eritrea at the African Union Summit, which forced Libya into supporting the majority on including sanctions language in the communiqu. Omaar underscored his commitment to providing the Security Council with evidence on Eritrean involvement in the insurgency, proposing that the head of the Somalia Sanctions Committee visit Mogadishu to witness the situation first-hand. END SUMMARY.

Domestic Progress, Stalemate with Eritrea

12. (C) In a July 23rd meeting with Ambassador DiCarlo, Somali Foreign Minister Mohamed Abdullahi Omaar highlighted the Transitional Federal Government's (TFG) progress, citing political, military and administrative advances. He said that the opposition has lost credibility due to their association with al-Shaabab and Hizbul Islam, whose misdeeds, including recent kidnappings and attacks on United Nations offices in southern Somalia, have angered and embarrassed religious and community leaders. On the military front, Omaar stated that the TFG's national security force has reorganized and improved its logistical capacity, and expanded its troop recruitment beyond Mogadishu. Omaar cited military training organized by the Djiboutian government as also helping improve the force's capacity. Omaar described his plan to create a transparent financial accounting structure that would allow international community participation in the management of funds donated to the TFG. He said that this entity would be administered by the TFG's Ministries of Finance and Planning, as well as the Central Bank, and include delegates from the World Bank, European Union, Organization of Islamic Council and donor countries. Somali expatriates with international financial expertise would play an advisory role, according to Omaar, and local communities could tap into the new mechanism to receive funding more transparently. Omaar noted that he will submit a concept document on the plan to the USG to solicit advice and guidance.

13. (C) Omaar pointed to Eritrean President Isaias as the stumbling block in improving relations, stating that although top Eritrean diplomats have constructive ideas for reconciliation, Isaias has repeatedly rejected them. Omaar said he is now taking a "wait and see" approach, allowing the African Union's (AU) "heat to percolate" within Eritrea before deciding on next steps. Omaar also discussed the French hostage situation, describing Eritrea's failure to secure the hostages for France after al-Shaabab captured them from Hizbul Islam, a group supported financially by Eritrea.

Omaar noted Hizbul Islam's weakness vis--vis al-Shaabab, which controls two key airports and is militarily more powerful, as the impediment to extracting the hostages.

Eritrea Ostracized at AU Summit

¶4. (C) Omaar gave an account of the African Union Summit in Sirte, describing the events leading up to the AU Peace and Security Council's 52-1 decision (Note: Libya abstained from the vote; only Eritrea voted against the proposal. End note) to incorporate language in its communique calling for UNSC sanctions against Eritrea, including a naval blockade and no-fly zone. Omaar said that Gaddafi, as chairman of the AU, had reached out on three separate occasions to Eritrean President Isayas Afewerki, urging him to appear in Sirte, but was rebuffed. Although Gaddafi had hoped to play a role in resolving the dispute diplomatically, Omaar explained that Gaddafi was "silenced and forced into agreeing" with the position expressed by frustrated AU member states. Omaar said that a wide and diverse range of states, including Tanzania, Zambia, Mauritius and the Gambia, gave forceful statements highlighting Eritrean offenses in the Horn of Africa, while no one came to Eritrea's defense. Omaar described a dramatic scene at the debate's close when Libya was forced to end the session and deny Eritrea the floor after its delegation "refused to back down."

Continuing UNSC Deliberations

¶5. (C) Ambassador DiCarlo told Foreign Minister Omaar that while Council members do not necessarily wish to close the

USUN NEW Y 00000723 002 OF 002

door on negotiations with Eritrea, the lack of progress has prompted the Council to seriously assess next steps. DiCarlo pointed to the limited number of speakers during a July 22 Security Council lunch on Somalia with Ugandan Foreign Minister Sam Kutesa as evidence that the SC is still contemplating the direction it will take; additional information on Eritrean actions within Somalia would be useful as the Council determines how best to move forward. Omaar cited the presence of three Eritrean military officers living in Mogadishu, as well as the discovery of Eritrean ammunition in the city, as examples of Eritrean meddling, and said that he is ready to support any request for more information. Omaar suggested that Matt Bryden, the head of the UN Monitoring Group on Somalia, travel to Mogadishu to witness the evidence first-hand.

¶6. (U) The meeting concluded with Foreign Minister Omaar noting that he will speak at the Security Council briefing on Somalia Wednesday, July 29.

RICE